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## Talk of the Trade

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**Best Sellers — Reference Titles**  
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*Thesaurus of Eric Descriptors*; Ed. by James E. Houston. Oryx 2001 \$72.95 Cloth 1573563307.

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*Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*; Ed. by Victor Watson. Cambridge Univ Press 2001 \$75.00 Cloth 0521550645.

Roberts, Robert North. *Ethics in U.S. Government: An Encyclopedia of Investigations, Scandals, Reforms, and Legislation*. Greenwood 2001 \$69.95 Cloth 0313311986.

*Encyclopedia of Death and Dying*; Ed. by Glennys Howarth. Routledge 2001 \$135.00 Cloth 0415188253.

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Spalding, Mark D. *World Atlas of Coral Reefs*. Univ of California Press 2001 \$55.00 Cloth 0520232550.

Jackson, Cynthia L. *African American Education: A Reference Handbook*. ABC-Clio 2001 \$45.00 Cloth 157607269x.

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Boone, David R. (Ed.) *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology; v. 1: The Archaea and The Deeply Branching Phototrophic Bacteria*. Springer-Verlag 2001 \$99.00 Cloth 0387987711.

*Companion to Southern Literature: Themes, Genres, Places, People, Movements, and Motifs*; Ed. by Joseph M. Flora. Louisiana State Univ Pr 2002 \$69.95 Cloth 0807126926.

Berinstein, Paula. *Alternative Energy: Facts, Statistics, and Issues*. Oryx 2000 \$69.95 Paper 1573562483.

*Encyclopedia of Criminology and Deviant Behavior*; Ed. by Clifton D. Bryant. Brunner-Routledge 2001 \$520.00 Cloth 1560327723.

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*Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible*; Ed. by Bruce M. Metzger. Oxford Univ Press 2001 \$35.00 Cloth 0195146417.

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Perdue, Theda, 1949-. *Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Southeast*. Columbia Univ Press 2001 \$45.00 Cloth 0231115709.

*Handbook of Aging and The Social Sciences*; Ed. by Robert H. Binstock. Academic 2001 \$59.95 Paper 0120991942.

Stewart, Chuck, 1951-. *Homosexuality and The Law: A Dictionary*. ABC-Clio 2001 \$55.00 Cloth 1576072673.

*Native American Women: A Biographical Dictionary*; Ed. by Gretchen M. Bataille. Routledge 2001 \$85.00 Cloth 0415930200.

*Datapiaedia of the United States; 1790-2005: America Year By Year*; Ed. by George Thomas Kurian. Bernan Press 2001 \$125.00 Cloth 089059256x.

Unger, Harlow G., 1931-. *Encyclopedia of American Education*. Facts On File 2001 \$225.00 Cloth 0816043442.

Hinchey, Patricia H., 1951-. *Student*

*Rights: A Reference Handbook*. ABC-Clio 2001 \$45.00 Cloth 1576072665.

Stebbins, Leslie. *Work and Family in America: A Reference Handbook*. ABC-Clio 2001 \$45.00 Cloth 157607224x.

Clements, Frank A., 1942-. *Historical Dictionary of Arab and Islamic Organizations*. Scarecrow 2001 \$59.50 Cloth 0810839776.

Bettelheim, Adriel. *Aging in America A to Z*. Congressional Quarterly 2001 \$58.00 Cloth 156802584x.

*Encyclopedia of Fundamentalism*; Ed. by Brenda E. Brasher. Routledge 2001 \$125.00 Cloth 0415922445.

Ostrom, Hans A. *Langston Hughes Encyclopedia*. Greenwood 2002 \$99.95 Cloth 0313303924.

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Sibley, David, 1961-. *Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*. Alfred A. Knopf 2001 \$45.00 Cloth 0679451234.

Cullinan, Bernice E. (Ed.) *Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. Continuum 2001 \$150.00 Cloth 0826412718. 

## Talk of the Trade

by **Barry Fast** (Deltabooks, 186 Cross St., City Island, NY 10464; Phone: 718-885-9563) <arry0112@aol.com>

**T**he Book Trade is not as glitzy as The Industry (Hollywood), but there is more than enough gossip to share. Here's the latest book world buzz, some serious, some frivolous, all true.

### But They Still Won't Sell Wheaties

**Borders**, the second largest retail bookstore chain, will overhaul the way it selects and merchandises books. **Gregory Josefowicz**, the Chairman and CEO of **Borders**, says his stores will adopt "category management" to buy and promote books. First pioneered in the grocery business (**Josefowicz** rose from bagger to president over 22 years at **Albertson's**), category man-

agement relies upon manufacturers and distributors to stock shelves and determine placement. **Borders** will modify category management by choosing publishers to co-manage 250 different book categories. These co-managers will determine which titles will be bought, and how they will be arranged and displayed in the stores. **Borders** will have the final say, but will rely on these publishers, based on their expertise in each category. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, three examples have already been set up: **HarperCollins** will co-manage the Cooking and Romance categories, and **Random House** will co-manage the Young Readers

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category. Can publishers be relied upon to be fair to competitors' titles in the category they co-manage? This remains to be seen, but there will be a strong incentive to keep **Borders** happy with the selections. Time, and sales within categories, will tell.

### **Slammin' Sammy Snead Was Dead and Tiger Cost Too Much**

The *Boston Globe* reports that **John Updike** scored 99, beating **Chip McGrath** and **Ward Just** in a tourney to promote *The Ultimate Golf Book*.

### **Next Time Try Jerry Springer**

"It's shocking" said a **Powells** (of Portland, Oregon) **Bookstore** manager, after the store sold only four copies of the book. "That's hardly any, especially for something's that hit **Oprah**." A buyer for San Francisco's famed *A Clean Well Lighted Place* asked rhetorically, "Why would anyone pay money for something that's going to make them feel worse?" This season's biggest publishing disaster seems to be **Sylvia Ann Hewlett's** *Creating a Life: Professional Women and the Quest for Children*. Not that **Talk/Miramax's Tina Brown** didn't try. In addition to **Oprah**, **Hewlett** garnered appearances on **60 Minutes**, **The Today Show** with a long **Katie** interview, **Good Morning America** and a **Nightly News** sit down with **Tom**. The *LA* and *New York Times* editorialized, and *The Nation* added its intellectual weight to the discussion of the conflicts between career demands and baby-making. The book had every opportunity to lead the bestseller list, but it is not even in the top fifty. What happened?

No one knows for sure, but there are lots of theories. The media didn't get it, and focused mostly on the difficulties of getting pregnant if a woman waits until her forties. (*New York Magazine* cover "Baby Panic!") The title was off-putting, and the cover photo was dreary. Originally entitled *Baby Hunger* (still the title of the poorly selling British edition), the editorial and promotional team involved with the book found that "offensive" and insisted on the present title. Too much of the book reads like a long magazine article, say some critics. Others believe that most women already understand the trade-offs between careers and babies, have made their choices, and as with all difficult life decisions, don't need to revisit the issues. Whatever the reasons, author **Hewlett** is among the baffled: "I don't know what to make of this absence of huge sales" she said recently to the *New York Times*.

### **My Novel is Bigger Than Your Novel**

We have the **National Book Award** and Great Britain has the **Booker**, and never the twain shall meet—or so we thought. Few Americans know that the **Booker Prize** for Fiction has been sponsored by an English food retailer (here we go again with books

and groceries). But this year the **Man Group**, a British money management firm, donated \$3.5 million to the **Booker** committee, and hopes to use the prestige that leaks from the prize to enter the American market. And this means that the **Booker** committee, who selects the winner, may have to allow American writers to contend for the prize. Indeed, the committee chairwoman recently opined that American writers exist in a "different (meaning higher) league" than their British counterparts. "The American novels paint on a much bigger canvas," said the **Booker** judge, **Lisa Jardine**. She drew a flurry of outraged reaction from the literary elite clustered between Oxford and London: **Ian McEwan**, winner of the **1998 Booker**, said this remark reflected a "certain strain of British self-denigration — (the notion) is fatuous, cringing." This concept of British inadequacy is, according to *The Observer's* literary critic, "quasi-philistine, provincial and rather embarrassing."

*The Guardian* published a cartoon showing a B52 bomber dropping novels instead of explosives on the British countryside. But the Brits hold firmly to the concept of fair play, which they invented and perfected. According to *The Bookseller*, a number of authors and publishers welcome the possible inclusion of American authors, which may happen in 2004.

### **Even Tom Clancy Loves New York Now**

The famously New York-avoiding author of *The Sum of All Fears* and many other doomsday scenarios, says he never could have dreamed up the September 11 attack. In the past, publishers and agents would trek to **Clancy's** 24 room Maryland estate for meetings, surrounded by over 400 acres of land with a grand view of the Chesapeake Bay and a Sherman tank parked on the front lawn (presumably unloaded). His sentiments about the city have changed slightly after watching us deal with the tragedy. Quoted in *The New York Observer*, **Clancy** admired the fortitude and good humor of ordinary citizens of the Big Apple. "I didn't think New Yorkers had this in them, but I was wrong about that" he said. "I'm sure they'll be back to their ass\*\*\*\* selves in a few weeks." Despite his prediction, he has purchased a modest city abode on East 76th Street for over \$2.5 million, a corner duplex with three bedrooms and four and a half bathrooms, herring-bone oak floors, an English roof garden and pool, just in time for summer swimming. We appreciate his vote of confidence.

### **Will U.S. Retaliate, Banning Cold Weather Fronts and Hockey Players?**

Warning that their business will be devastated, Canadian booksellers are urging their government to block **Amazon.com's** expansion into our **NAFTA** partner to the north.

**Amazon** has to collaborate with an existing Canadian book distributor in order to physically enter the market, in accord with government rules (of course **Amazon** already sells millions of American books to Canadian purchasers over the borderless Internet). These rules require foreign booksellers to form a Canadian controlled partnership in order to sell Canadian books to Canadian consumers from a store or warehouse on Canadian soil. Yet the bookseller's association is complaining that **Amazon** would be entering their market under "the false guise of Canadian partnership." In other words, adhering to protectionist regulations results in accusations of deception. **Joseph Heller**, where are you when we need you? The association further argues that an **Amazon** physical presence in Canada would "devastate an important Canadian industry employing real book lovers in every community across Canada." There are contrasting viewpoints,

however. **Amazon** in Canada would employ local people — some of whom might be real book lovers — and sell Canadian rather than American editions, benefitting the publishing industry in Canada. Canadian distributor **Raincoast** tells the *Financial Post* that they are not the rumored **Amazon** partner,

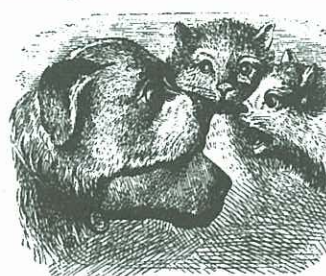
as **Amazon** announces a summer opening for their Canadian foray. The **Amazon** partner is **BookExpress**, which is owned by **Raincoast**. Canadian book retailers tremble, awaiting the blizzard from the south.

### **Nancy Drew Mystery Solved; She Isn't, and Has Never Been, a Lesbian**

She pounded away on her typewriter for three quarters of a century, writing 130 books and 23 of the **Nancy Drew** series, including the first one, *The Secret of the Old Clock*, in 1930. At the age of 96, **Mildred Wirt Benson** passed away in May. As **Carolyn Keene** she was paid \$125 for each of the popular adolescent detective novels, and prohibited by the publisher from revealing herself as the author. In one particularly productive year she wrote 13 **Nancy Drew** books.

**Benson**, in two interviews with *Salon* and the *New York Times* in 1999, said that girls were ripe for a change in the way young women were portrayed in literature. "I think **Nancy** was the character girls were waiting for—not her sex appeal, but how tough and smart and adventurous she is." But the success of the series also confined her in ways she resented. "I'm so sick of **Nancy Drew** I could vomit," she told a *New York Times* reporter at a **Nancy Drew** symposium at the University of Iowa in 1993, where **Benson** was the first person to earn a Master's degree in Journalism in 1927. Scholars who study the **Nancy Drew** series have published learned treatises on the role of these novels

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## Issues in Vendor/Library Relations from page 88

librarians! If we become overwhelmed and paralyzed, if we cease selecting good books to read, and finally cease reading ourselves, we are frauds. In my pamphlet, I explore the problem and offer some approaches to deal with it (provided one isn't lazy) including this advice from **Lawrence Clark Powell**: "How does the librarian find time for books? I want you to listen carefully while I give the answer, for it is a precious secret I am about to disclose. One finds time for books by taking it."

**BN:** One of the ways librarians have been able to deal with the number of books published today, of course, is to have an approval plan. If an approval plan profile is accurate enough — and I know a lot of librarians and vendor reps who work pretty hard at that — that frees time for librarians to deal with other things. Sometimes librarians don't spend much time anymore with the approval books. So approval plans — a way to handle the great quantity of books out there to buy — has distanced some librarians from books. I'm beginning to feel a little guilty.

**PB:** I only wish librarians felt the same way — a little guilty — for not reviewing the weekly approval plan shipments. Many have decided "why bother?" The flow of books seems good, the coverage seems good, the approval profiles are working. Why not just fly on automatic pilot? After all, we're all very busy. Anybody who thinks this way, of course, should not be working in collection development. A collection development librarian delights in looking at new books. It's the best part of the job, and an indispensable source of knowledge. When a particularly good title appears, it triggers a series of questions: What other books has the author written? Does the library own them? In general, what are our holdings on this subject? Are we lacking any key works? Noticing that the title is a translation, does the library have the original foreign language edition? Noticing that the title is part of a series, what other volumes might be useful? This kind of inquiry leads to real collection development as distinguished from mere book selection. Occasionally one discovers that a part of the collection is in need of an overhaul, and then the fun really begins.

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in the formation of American culture, and feminist scholars have even found evidence of lesbianism in the series. Commenting on this insight, **Benson** said, "This is the silliest, most out-of-the-picture thing I ever heard. I'd like to blow a cork!" **Benson**, who outlived two husbands and is survived by a daughter, worked at the *Toledo Blade* newspaper until the last day of her life, when an ambulance transported her from her desk to the hospital. 


Furthermore, one must monitor approval plans to know what is not coming in. Many small independent publishers despair at how few orders they receive after sending out announcements and advertising to libraries. I am referring to publishers of excellent literary titles, not silly pop stuff. For example, small publishers will risk publishing foreign literature in translation, which is quite appropriate for college and research libraries. Yet sales are dismal. Why? Probably because some inattentive, lazy selector assumes that the title will come in on approval, and so simply trashes the announcement.

**BN:** Well, I'm once again feeling some guilt, since I will confess that we vendors could do a better job than we sometimes do in covering those small publishers. And yet if we were perfect, and were able to track down everything, the trend you describe, Peter, might just accelerate. Years ago, vendors would promote approval plans as a way to cover the "core" — basically university presses and the major commercial publishers. But librarians asked for more, and sometimes made "more" a condition of keeping or winning their business. So we did cover more and went well beyond anyone's "core," to the point that some librarians may think that we cover about everything on approval. Which we never did and I'm sure never will. Maybe we need to be clearer about that, that approval plans are about covering a certain core of material — wide as that "core" has

grown to be — and that they are not the complete answer to collection development.

**PB:** Approval plan vendors do a remarkable job of providing a wide, solid core (and beyond) but there will always be off-beat, small, regional, ethnic, independent, and brand new presses that escape the net. For example (and this is only one of a hundred different examples), books on Hispanic genealogy are almost always published by independent researchers, who are very hard to track down. We purchase them from a specialist bookseller, who is constantly scanning for off-beat titles of potential importance to research libraries. Selectors must be able to spot these waifs amidst the mass of publishers' advertising made redundant by approval plans. If they just play the percentages, they will never build truly distinguished collections.

**BN:** Maybe we could end just where we began, then, Peter. Let's help librarians obtain one particular title of value from a small and independent press. What are the details for buying your *Reading the Map of Knowledge*?

**PB:** My pleasure, Bob. The full citation is: **Peter Briscoe**, *Reading the Map of Knowledge: The Art of Being a Librarian*. Grand Terrace, CA: Palo Verde Press, 2001. Libraries may order it from their preferred vendor. For individuals, the easiest way to obtain a copy is to send a \$5.00 check payable to Peter Briscoe, 18608 Oak Park Drive, Riverside, CA 92504. 

## Bet You Missed It

### Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Pamela M. Rose, M.L.S.** (Web Services & Library Promotion Coordinator, University at Buffalo; Phone: 716-829-2408 x129; Fax: 716-829-2211) <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu> [wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose](http://wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose)

### THE GHASTLY GETS MORE SO by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

The tedious and tiresome has become maddening and gruesome. Vast databases vomit up page upon page of text out of the maw of cyberspace anarchy, and bibliographic citation is now officially a nightmare. With no single authority, punctuation, abbreviation and what-goes-in-what order is a jumbled mess. **NISO** is trying to unify standards, but it's bumping heads with **ISO** over library statistics. **NISO** wants to count them and **ISO** wants to measure them by the foot.

See — June Kronholz, "Bibliography Mess: The Internet Wreaks Havoc With the Form," *Wall Street Journal*, p.A1, May 2, 2002.

### TEETERING GIANT by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

**Ziff Davis Media's** auditors say the illness may very well be terminal. **Ziff Davis** magazines depend on technology advertising which is the hardest hit in the ad depression. It lost \$415.7 million over the nine months ending Dec. 31, '01. Ye-gads. Imagine being the CFO in charge of that.

See — "Ziff Davis Auditors Express Doubts On Its Survivability," *Wall Street Journal*, p. A6, May 2, 2002.